

OUT OF TIME

Issue No. 39 *Out of Control--Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners* Sept 1997

DEMONSTRATE

**Saturday, October 4, 12 noon
at the two Chowchilla women's prisons**

Shumate vs. Wilson, a 1995 lawsuit brought by the women at two California prisons, challenged the criminal medical neglect, torture and abuse of the 5,000 women inside. On August 11, 1997 the suit was settled out of court. However, nothing will change and women prisoners will continue to die if we don't keep up the pressure against the California Department of Corrections. In the small town of Chowchilla, only one women's prison is covered by the settlement agreement. The newer prison, Valley State Prison for Women (dubbed the "Pelican Bay Prison for Women" by its warden) has yet to be challenged for its brutality and poor medical care. There are nearly 5,000 women not covered by the agreement.

**STOP THE RETALIATION
SUPPORT OUR SISTERS INSIDE**

Women prisoners who were outspoken leaders and organizers of the lawsuit are facing retaliation. Join the October 4th demonstration to demand and end to all retaliation. Rally and Demonstrate in front of both Chowchilla women's prisons to support the rights of our sisters inside to life and medical care.

**Carpool from the Bay Area at 8 AM
S.F.: Meet at Safeway, Church and Market
East Bay: Meet at McArthur BART**

Sponsored by the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.
For rides and information, call (415)255-7036, ext. 4 or (510)834-5656, ext. 3150

Please see article on page 4, OOT for more details about the lawsuit and the settlement.

PRISONS ARE THE REAL CRIME

WOMEN DON'T BELONG IN CAGES

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Lolita Lebron

Lolita Lebron addresses the United Nations. "It's time to bring them home!" This is the cry of the independentistas in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. They are referring to the 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners and Prisoners of War being held in U.S. prisons around the country. Some have been in jail for over 17 years for political acts against the U.S.



Government. These acts were carried out during the 70's and 80's to expose the crime of colonization. Ms. Lolita Lebron, an ex-political prisoner, was released from U.S. prison in 1981 after serving over 25 years. In 1954, Lolita and three other compatriots entered the U.S. House of Representatives

armed, demanding an end to United States colonization of their island nation. 1998 marks the 100th anniversary of the military invasion and conquest of Puerto Rico by the United States. The colonial situation has to end. It is a crime against humanity and undermines democracy and the ability of Puerto Rico to exercise its right to self-determination.

Look for rallies and demonstrations for the release of the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War in the coming months. **For more information:** contact 415/285-4452 or cohitre@pacbel.net

Prisoners Lose Clothes

The Federal Correctional Institute at Dublin (FCIDublin) is inside a sprawling army base in Pleasanton, CA. Its low buildings and small green lawns are surrounded by high double metal fences with coils of razor wire. The prison is currently at more than 200% capacity; two to three women in cells sized for one.

Last year the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) ordered that the women had to wear uniforms: khaki polyester shirt and pants or a green double knit (not cotton) sweatshirt-like outfit. Prisoners could still wear their own clothes on the unit.

This year's rules are even more restrictive. No personal clothes are allowed; only

three underpants, only three bras, all white. All bed sheets and towels must be white and must be prison issued. Sheets with patterns or colors and large towels from the days when prisoners could get packages from home, have to be sent out of the prison. Each women is allowed 6 pairs of footwear, including shower shoes and slippers. In addition, only 5 books are permitted and only 25 photographs.

What is the point of all the new rules? Is it for "security reasons"? Is it because reading isn't good for women's minds? Or is it just an additional attempt by the BOP to control all aspects of a prisoner's body and soul?

SPARKS FLY VIII

**8th Annual International Day of Solidarity with
Women Political Prisoners**
Saturday November 8, 1997

**First Unitarian Universalist Church
1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco**

**Childcare provided. Wheelchair accessible.
For more information call: 415-647-6695**

Attica Brother Akil Al-Jundi Dies

Akil Al-Jundi, a Harlem street tough who became a leading legal advocate for young criminals facing prison sentences, but only after he had served 15 years for murder and survived the bloody Attica prison takeover, died on Aug. 13 at New York Downtown Hospital in Manhattan of complications from diabetes. Al-Jundi was 56.

He was the lead plaintiff in the class-action suit to obtain damages for more than 1,200 prisoners beaten, tortured or denied medical care in the aftermath of the inmate uprising of September 1971.

To Legal Aid Society lawyers, judges, prosecutors and others in the Manhattan criminal justice system, Al-Jundi, who lived in the South Bronx, was a consummate professional who prepared presentencing reports with such meticulous care and argued for leniency with such persuasive passion that more than a few of the convicted criminals he represented had their sentences reduced or were routed to drug rehabilitation programs, mental health clinics or other alternatives to prison.

No wonder. As even some judges came to appreciate, an encounter with Al-Jundi was sometimes all the rehabilitation a young criminal might need.

That was because Al-Jundi spoke to them with a special understanding of where they were, what they might become and what they might avoid if they pursued education rather than crime. As a Legal Aid Society advocate since 1976, Al-Jundi knew whereof he spoke and had the scars to prove it.



A native of St. Croix, Virgin Islands, who moved to New York with his mother when he was 12, Al-Jundi, whose original name was Herbert Scott Dean, soon dropped out of school and became a gang leader in Harlem and the Bronx, where he used and sold drugs, committed armed robberies and served as a bodyguard for heroin dealers.

After numerous scrapes with the law, Al-Jundi's life on the streets ended in 1961 when he was convicted of second-degree murder after thrusting an umbrella into the temple of a man who he said had come into his turf to engage a prostitute.

Sentenced to 20 years to life, he proved to be one of the rare inmates who find salvation in prison. Al-Jundi, who credited a conversion to Islam with saving his life, became a demon for education. He obtained a high school equivalency diploma and began a lifelong habit of reading every book he could get his hands on.

An educated prisoner can be a threat to a system that routinely brutalizes inmates, and it was hardly surprising that after a disturbance at the Auburn Correctional Facility in 1970, Al-Jundi, who had previously taken part in a disturbance at the Tombs, the pens in the basement of the Criminal Courts building in Manhattan, was one of a number of inmates singled out for punishment: transfer to the dreaded Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo.

During the spontaneous prison uprising in September 1971, Al-Jundi was part of the Muslim contingent that supervised guards taken hostage. The uprising ended on

Sept. 13, when the state police, under orders from Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, began an all-out assault, indiscriminately firing more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition over six bloody minutes, killing 10 hostages and 39 inmates and wounding hundreds of others.

As he later recalled it, Al-Jundi, who was shot through the hand by an explosive bullet and struck in the face by buckshot, was dumped in a cell and left bleeding for hours without medical attention after he began chanting to protest the torture of an inmate awaiting treatment for a stomach wound.

By the time he was paroled in 1975, Al-Jundi had undergone 34 operations to repair his damaged hand and had acquired a new mission in life: obtaining justice for the hundreds of inmates who had been mistreated.

As the minister of information for the Attica Brothers Legal Defense Fund, Al-Jundi gave his name to a federal class action that led to a 1992 verdict that held the state responsible for a variety of atrocities but left the assessment of damages to later litigation.

Elizabeth Fink, the inmates' lead attorney, recalled Tuesday that Al-Jundi, who took a leave from his Legal Aid Society job, had provided invaluable assistance during the trial.

When a former fellow inmate, Frank Smith, won a \$4 million judgment in June, Al-Jundi was too ill to be in the courtroom, but he was not

forgotten. After hearing the verdict, Ms. Fink said, "He was the first one I called."

Al-Jundi, who was reunited with his high school sweetheart, Evelyn Battles, after his prison sentence and accepted her three children as his own, is survived by Ms. Battles; a son, Ronald; two daughters, Wanda and Monique, and five grandchildren.

Jericho '98 Spring Break March

A march to the White House is being organized by progressive and revolutionary organizations during Spring Break 1998. A national mobilization of college students, progressive organizations, and independent activists will demand freedom for all political prisoners in the U.S.

There are over 150 political prisoners and Prisoners of War held in U.S. Prisons. The United States government vehemently denies the existence of political prisoners and insists these Women and Men are criminals. The Jericho March raises the issue of political prisoners and their amnesty.

The march will be in front of the White House on March 27, 1998.

While there is a national coordinating body there are also local organizers in the Bay Area. For more information and how you can get involved contact: Jericho '98 Organizing Committee. P.O. Box 3585. Oakland, CA 94609. 510-635-7710 (phone & fax) . Jericho98ba@aol.com



OUT OF TIME

Congress Attempts Another Giant Step Back

Congress is considering a draconian law, the Juvenile Crime Control Act of 1997, that will abolish juvenile courts and detention centers, and prosecute children over 13 as adults. The law is superfluous since most states have provisions for trying children as adults if it is deemed necessary. Adult prisons employ extreme punishment and depravity, with little or no programs for rehabilitation.

It is said that the juvenile offenders system is faltering due to lack of funds, understaffing, and rising caseloads. In New Orleans public defenders have no offices, no phones, and often do not meet their clients until they are in the courtroom. In Chicago the number of cases heard each month has more than tripled in ten years, but convictions have remained the same. Kids with serious problems are often overlooked or pass through the system without being properly evaluated. The proposed law has provisions for \$1.5 billion in Federal grants to go to states that will place young people in adult court. This money would be better spent on programs for at-risk children and their families when children are 4, 5, and 6, and to restructure and improve the juvenile system already in place. The number of juvenile delinquency cases has risen four times since 1960. Child abuse and neglect has increased five times faster than delinquency cases. These abused kids are often the ones getting into trouble. Over half the kids are arrested for minor offenses such as shoplifting and curfew violations. These teens would be better helped with peer counseling, legal advocates, and drug abuse intervention programs and organized activities than incarceration.

Children placed in adult facilities have been raped by guards, tortured and murdered by other prisoners and have committed suicide after spending less than a week in jail. Plus there is no evidence that being sent to adult prison reduces youth crime. A seven year study of the juvenile system in Florida of over 5000 youths showed that those tried as adults committed new crimes that were more serious and more violent than the crimes they had been convicted of before.

The straight media would prefer that we believe the biggest danger to these teens is the adult prisoners. However the dangers are far more complicated. A Congress that would rather lock up children than fund schools. An economic system that fears unemployment may fall too low. An opulent society where 1 in 5 children go to bed hungry. In 1930s Germany the laws were already in place when the fascists were voted into power.

Mumia Abu-Jamal

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court recently sent Mumia Abu-Jamal's case back to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas for additional testimony regarding police misconduct. On June 26, Pamela Jenkins testified before Judge Albert Sabo, who is responsible for more than twice as many death sentences than any other judge in the country.

Pamela Jenkins was a key FBI witness whose 1995 testimony led to the convictions of six corrupt Philadelphia police officers. At the June 1997 hearing, she revealed that one of the corrupt officers, Tom Ryan, and a detective investigating Mumia's case, Richard Ryan, had pressured her to identify Mumia as the shooter at his 1982 trial. They did this with full knowledge that she was not present when Officer Daniel Faulkner was shot. Jenkins had become sexually involved with Tom Ryan 1981, when she was just 15 years old, and had served as his informant.

Jenkins went on to detail police intimidation of Cynthia White, the only eyewitness to finger Mumia at his 1982 trial. At the time of Mumia's arrest and trial, both Jenkins and White were working as street prostitutes in center city Philadelphia. Jenkins's recent testimony adds to the growing body of evidence that White's testimony was false and coerced by the police.

Key Points of Jenkins' testimony:

- In 1981, Cynthia White was a police informant and was providing her services as a prostitute to police.
- White had told Jenkins back in 1982 that she was being pressured by the police regarding Mumia's case and that she feared for her life.
- The police paid Jenkins to locate White, who had disappeared prior to Mumia's 1982 trial.
- In early 1997, while assisting defense investigators in their search, Jenkins saw White alive in Philadelphia in the company of Tom and Richard Ryan.

Equal Justice USA's 1995 report on the scandal, *Trampling the Public Trust*, contact our office or visit our website at www.igc.org/quixote/ej.

POETS BOMB.....

On June 19, two women hand delivered unmarked boxes of manifestos, poems and innocuous looking objects to 14 prominent people and places all over the city. These "terrorists" are members of the ASSAULT POETRY UNIT and operate in New Orleans. Among the targets were the mayors office, a famous French Quarter restaurant, Anne Rice's mansion, as well as a burlesque joint on Bourbon St. They left a watermelon at the local newspaper publisher's office and a poem titled "Declaration of the New Terrorism".

Local artists call it refreshing, but the police are calling it a felony. The newspaper and others called the bomb squad who then spent hours of the sweltering and humid day trying to defuse the melon etc.

"The era of poetic passivity is over," declared the manifesto. "Violent acts of consciousness have only begun." The poets' demand increased literacy and appreciation for writers including: "...that the mayor read "The Brown Menace or Poem on the Survival of Roaches" by Audre Lorde on the 7 o'clock news; inaugural speeches be written (and read) in iambic pentameter; local police read a book of poetry a week....hold monthly poetry readings in the main precinct; the great celebrities and powers that be in this city of more poverty than the tourist world knows gather round, hold hands, smack lips and teach some more kids how to read."

The brothers Kuffner were easily arrested as they returned the rental car they had used. Aaron is 23, a Web page artist who formerly lived in the SF bay area; and Geoffrey is 24 and describes himself as a NY writer. The max for their creative endeavors is 5 yrs and/or \$5,000.

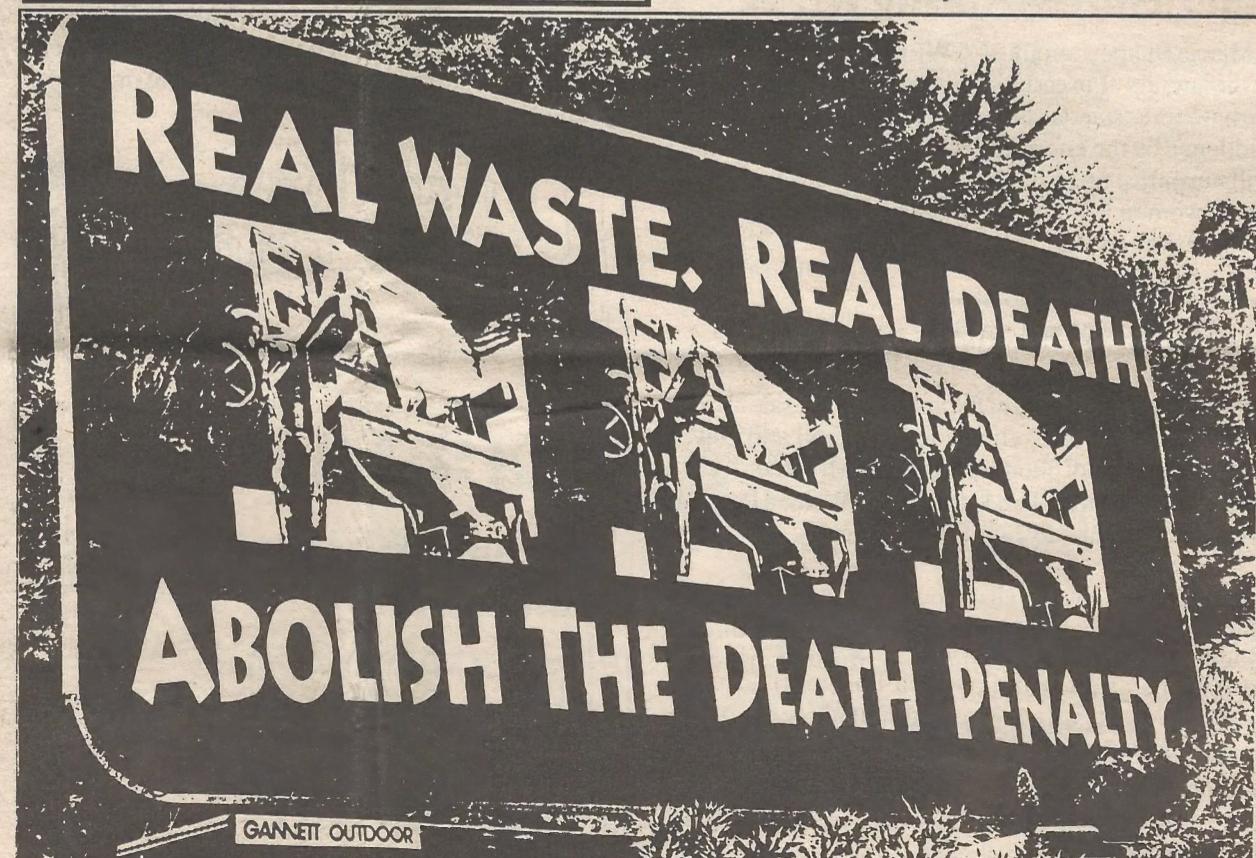
"...poets...do a dance on the edge...ever since the DaDa movement...poets have provoked society in symbolic ways. This is a kind of tradition that advances Western civilization...it is a mental activity that refreshes the psyche of society..." says Andrei Codrescu, NPR commentator and poet. WRITE ON !!!

December 6th Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

ASSEMBLE 10 am Fell & Baker, SF

RALLY 1pm UN Plaza, 7th & Market

For information call: 415-821-0459



billboard by California Dept. of Corrections

OUT OF TIME

Shumate vs. Wilson

from *The Fire Inside*, newsletter of the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP)

Lawyers representing women prisoners at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) and California Institute for Women (CIW) settled a 1995 lawsuit regarding the abominable medical care that the women have been receiving. The settlement gives the California Department of Corrections (CDC) 16 months to provide adequate medical care to the prisoners.

If the settlement is approved by the district court, an assessor will monitor health care in the two prisons with the assistance of four medical experts. To be in compliance, the prisons must, among other requirements, make timely referrals to physicians for patients needing urgent care; ensure that prisoners receive necessary medications without life threatening delays; provide necessary physical therapy; offer preventative care including periodic physicals, pelvic and breast exams, Pap smears and mammograms; protect patient privacy by restricting access to medical records and ending practices that publicly identify women with HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. (The prisons have been doing none of the above! ed. note)

CCWP member Charisse Shumate, lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, expressed her mixed feelings about the settlement: "We won part of the battle, but we are losing the war. The battle won was at least a watching eye on CCWF's and CIW's medical departments... The war lost is the state still will not admit to their lack of knowledge of women's medical needs, their outright neglect that caused us to watch each other die behind these walls, who were not sentenced to death by a judge."

"The women who brought this suit aren't out for money or fame," said Ellen Barry, director of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. "They've stuck their necks out and stood up to the state for one simple reason: to hold the state of California responsible for meeting their basic medical needs. We will continue to monitor the situations at CCWF and CIW during and after the assessment period."

Marcia Bunney, another CCWP member and a plaintiff in the lawsuit: "I'm ecstatic about this settlement. Finally we have some standards that we can hold them to. But I'm saddened by the knowledge that they (prison officials) will never live up to this agreement and I wonder how many women will have to die in here before they will really make a change."

\$\$PHONE\$\$\$BANK\$\$

Well, we did it. Instead of the annual garage sale in front of Sandi's house on Collingwood, LAGAI and Out of Control did a day of phone banking. And it worked really well! We made more than \$1500 for the Women Political Prisoners Commissary Fund.

So BIG THANKS to all of you who responded to our calls and to all of you who gave us money ahead of time so we wouldn't call you. Also, thank you to the few who did the prep/set-up necessary to pull it off so smoothly (Bo especially appreciated the sandwich she inhaled before getting on the phone). Let us not forget the generosity of the Committee for Medical Rights of Women for Access, Equal Justice, and the National Lawyers Guild who let us use their space and phones.

GOODJOB

GERONIMO INTERVIEW



"G" continues to be overwhelmed by well wishers and probably some not so well wishers. People want to take him here and there to meet this one and that one. Some want to write books and make movies. But the Brother sez he ain't no movie star! He don't want no fancy cars or fancy women or drugs. He is a REVOLUTIONARY with an important job to do. The main thrust of that work is to bring attention to COINTELPRO crimes against the people, and recognition of the fact that there are political prisoners in the United States of America. All of this is part of his dedication to the continuing struggle to free his people and therefore all people enslaved in this land of genocide and slavery. So, even tho his schedule is totally overbooked, Bow is able to do a short phone interview with Geronimo. And here are the results for your reading edification & hopefully pleasure:

To the sisters inside: Alejandrina, Marilyn, Carmen, Dylcia, Lucy, Alicia, Silvia, Linda, Laura: "I do appreciate the strength of these women who continue to struggle every day of their lives for liberation wherever they find themselves.... there is a deep satisfying feeling to know that women participate on all levels of our struggles... I will continue to keep my shoulder to the wheel to do the work to expedite your release... you will never be forgotten..."

To the people who do prison work: "...you are a rare breed and so important for the future of all struggles... I salute these foot soldiers who remain so vigilant... especially the women who have continued this day to day work for years & years... your sacrifices are immeasurable... you are essential and greatly appreciated... without you the cause for women political prisoners would not be as advanced..."



"Don't let the ambience fool you, the death penalty's still in effect."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY*** ASSATA***

Yes..it's true...July 16 was the 50th birthday of Assata Shakur who has been living for many years in Cuba. Political asylum protects her and several others from extradition to the U.S.A. We salute Cuba for this courageous stand!

Assata was liberated from a women's maximum security prison in New Jersey 18 years ago. Not a shot was fired. She was often referred to in the East Coast media as a "...gunman of..." or the "...soul of the Black Liberation Army". She along with many comrades were specifically targeted COINTELPRO via FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover "...to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, and otherwise neutralize..."

From April '71 thru May '73, Assata had eight different trials. She was charged with 3 robberies (2 were banks), the kidnap of a drug dealer, the murder of a drug dealer, the attempted ambush/murder of policemen, and the murder of a New Jersey state trooper. There were 3 dismissals, 3 acquittals, 1 hung jury, and finally the New Jersey conviction. She was given life plus 30 yrs. It was apparently irrelevant that medical evidence proved that Assata was shot twice in the back while her arms were raised by these same state troopers. She did not fire a shot.

Assata spent more than 6 years the lone woman in men's prison. A special isolation cage was built for her in a basement where she could be observed every second.

If you have not read her autobiography, you owe it to yourself to do so. In a June '97 interview in ESSENCE magazine, Assata says she is a runner, is writing another book, and still constantly in contact with African-American struggles. Recently she has been telling everyone about the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal (the state of Pennsylvania continues to press for execution).

We send our love and strength and birthday kisses!!!

CURRENT EVENTS

*i understand that i am slightly out of fashion.
The in-crowd wants no part of me.*

*someone said that i am too sixties.
BLACK.
Someone else told me that i had failed to mellow.*

*It is true i have not straightened back my hair.
Not rediscovered maybelline.*

*And it is also true
that i still like African things,
like statues and dresses
and PEOPLE.*

*And it is also true
that struggle is foremost in my mind.
And i still rap about discipline--
my anger has not run away.*

*And i still can't stand ole el dorado.
And i still can't dig no one and one.
And i still can't dig no roka fellas.
And i call a pig as pig.
And a party, to my thinking happens only once in a while.*

*Anyway, i'm really kind of happy
being slightly out of style.*

poem by ASSATA SHAKUR